THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DR. RAJA RAMANNA): (a) and (b) All the water gasp of the Jowai-Agartala sector of NH-44 (Assam-Agartala road) have already been bridged. The phased replacement of the temporary and semi-permanent bridges is expected to be completed by 1994-95.

The present state of the road is satisfactory. However, due to the increase in traffic intensity, it has been proposed to develop the road from Jowai upto Karimaganj to double lane specifications.

(c) No, Sir.

Plan Programme to Accelerate Growth of Agriculture

†2277. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a meeting between the Planning Commission and the Agricultural Scientists was held recently to prepare a plan to accelerate growth of agriculture during the Eighth Five Year Year Plan period;

(b) if so, whether any concrete proposals have emerged from the discussions; and

(c) if so, to what extent these decisions would be incorporated in the Eighth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI BHAGEY GOBARDHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Concrete suggestions with respect to input delivery system, agricultural exports, remunerative prices, development of plantation crops, development of minor irrigation, development of agro-industries to arrest rural exodus to the cities were made. It was also stressed that greater emphasis should be laid on bio-technology to overcome the situation when the petroleum based fertilisers become scarce and costly. With reference to rainfed/dryland agriculture, watershed development was stressed. The need for developing rural infrastructure like roads, markets, etc. were suggested. It was also suggested that there should be farmers' exchange programme so that the farmers of one State can go to other States and learn improved methods of cultivation. It was suggested that there should be closer linkage between the farmers and the research workers in knowing their problems. Suggestions were also made for the development of Hroticulture with better planting material made easily available. It was also suggested that export of non-traditional items like basmati rice should also be encouraged. All these suggestions would receive consideration in formulation of the Eighth Plan.

Rate of Central Investment in Andhra Pradesh

††2278. SHRI TALARI MANOHAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the rate of Central investment in Andhra Pradesh has been very low as compared to other States; and

(b) if so, what was the annual Central investment in Andhra Pradesh during the past decade and how does it compare with other States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE

†Previously Unstarred Question 1222, transferred from the 17th August, 1990.

††Previously Unstarred Question 1268, transferred from the 20th August, 1990.